

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC75
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, IS, EG, JO
SUBJ: INITIAL WEST BANK PRESS REACTION TO SADAT SPEECH

1. WEST BANK ARABIC PRESS REACTION TO SADAT'S SPEECH
RANGES FROM WARY SUPPORT TO CONDEMNATION OF BOTH SADAT AND
PEACE INITIATIVE. MOST SEE THE DOOR TO PEACE AS STILL, BUT
BARELY, OPEN.

2. AL QUDS (MODERATE, PRO-JORDANIAN) SYMPATHETICALLY COMMENTS
ON SADAT'S SPEECH SEEING IT AS AN EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN CARTER'S
HAND THRU A DIRECT APPEAL TO AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AND AN
EFFORT TO PRESSURE GOI THRU A DIRECT APPEAL TO THE ISRAELI
PEOPLE. "SADAT HAS NOT CLOSED THE DOOR TO PEACE BUT IT IS
CLEAR IT IS NOT AS OPEN AS IT WAS TWO MONTHS AGO."

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3. AL FAJR (LEFTIST, PRO-PLO) RELEGATES SADAT'S SPEECH TO A
SECONDARY FRONT PAGE STORY UNDER HEADLINES "SADAT DISAPPOINTS..."
REJECTIONIST REACTION TO THE SPEECH AND ALGERIAN PROPOSALS
FOR ANOTHER ARAB SUMMIT ARE FEATURED. AL FAJR NOTES IN ITS
EDITORIAL THAT JUST PRIOR TO SADAT'S SPEECH JORDAN ANNOUNCED
FOR THE FIRST TIME COMPLETE SUPPORT OF SADAT'S INITIATIVE.
AND IT SEES IN SADAT'S SPEECH THE DESIGNATION OF A CLEAR ROLE

FOR JORDAN IN SOLVING THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

3. ASH-SHA'AB (INDEPENDENT, PALESTINIAN NATIONALIST) REPORTS THE MAIN POINTS OF THE SPEECH IN A STRAIGHT FORWARD MANNER, BUT EDITORIALY CONDEMNS SADAT FOR HIS CRITICISM OF SYRIA AND THE SOVIET UNION AND REITERATES ITS OLD CHARGE THAT SADAT IS USING THE PEACE INITIATIVE AS A PRETEXT FOR SEEKING A SEPARATE SETTLEMENT ON THE SINAI WITH ISRAEL.

4. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM INITIAL PRESS REACTION, SADAT'S JANUARY 21 SPEECH, UNLIKE HIS KNESSET SPEECH, HAS NOT ALTERED SIGNIFICANTLY THE TRAJECTORY OF WEST BANK THOUGHT. HIS FRIENDS, WHILE SYMPATHETIC, ENTERTAIN NO GREAT HOPES FOR THE SUCCESS OF HIS APPEAL TO THE U.S., ISRAELI AND WORLD OPINION TO SOFTEN THE GOI STAND. GLOATING CRITICS SUGGEST HE RESIGN OR RETURN IN HUMILITATION TO THE ARAB MAINSTREAM. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE FOR SADAT, ISRAELI INSISTENCE ON MAINTAINING SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI ARE SEEN BY SOME ON THE WEST BANK TO BELIE SADAT'S CLAIM THAT PEACE TALKS BROKE DOWN BECAUSE SADAT GAVE PRIORITY TO WITHDRAWALS FROM GOLAN, WEST BANK AND GAZA. NO ONE DISPUTES SADAT'S CHARGES THAT ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE IS ULTIMELY RESPONSIBLE, BUT UNGENEROUS CHARGE THAT SADAT HAS UNWISELY COMPROMISED THE ARAB POSITION IN FINDING THAT OUT.
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